



# Code Words

Volume 11, Issue 1     *Montgomery County Code Enforcement news from the Office of the County Attorney*     January 2008

Isiah Leggett, County Executive

Leon Rodriguez, County Attorney

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

*The Office of the County Attorney is the legal arm of the Montgomery County government. The County Attorney's staff exclusively advises and represents County agencies, including the Council. The Office of the County Attorney also serves the citizens of Montgomery County directly. Although staff cannot offer legal advice to individuals, we can offer guidance on the application of Montgomery County law, including code enforcement matters, and can help to direct those with questions to appropriate agencies. We can be reached at (240) 777-6700.*

## CODE ENFORCEMENT UNIT

*The Code Enforcement Unit serves the community by helping to fairly and reasonably enforce our County Code and helping to solve the problems leading to citations. If you have a question regarding County Code enforcement, a specific Code enforcement case, or would like to schedule a speaker for or meeting with your community group, please contact James Savage, Division Chief, at (240) 777-6779 or [james.savage@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:james.savage@montgomerycountymd.gov).*

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## Television Recycling

**Terrilyn Brooks**

*Associate County Attorney*

With the fast-paced production of “newer” and “better” electronic goods, fueling the speed at which an electronic good purchased today becomes obsolete tomorrow, the disposal of these goods could present an increasing problem. More and more consumers and businesses are unlikely to retain these outdated items and are in search of an easier and environmentally sound means to discard them. Electronics recycling, or e-cycling, is and has become a recognizable means to encourage and assist businesses and consumers in the disposal of their unwanted electronic goods.

Recently, Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett announced the County's new television recycling plan at the transfer station where County residents are asked to take their old and unwanted televisions. The transfer station is located at 16101 Frederick Road, Derwood, Maryland. It is open to Montgomery County residents for drop-offs on: Monday - Friday between 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Saturdays between 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., and Sundays between 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

E-cycling provides several benefits. The e-cycled goods can be refurbished, and the refurbished electronic equipment can be passed on to those in need; it helps reduce toxic chemicals, like mercury and lead, if properly managed; and reduces the amount of waste disposed of in landfills.

The County already e-cycles computers. However, consumers and businesses are encouraged to stay tuned for an expansion of the County's e-cycling program to include small electronics. Please call (240) 777-2370 for more information. A small graphic of a recycling symbol, consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.

# Emergency Preparedness

**Kathryn Lloyd**

*Assistant County Attorney*

It is essential for all Montgomery County residents to have a plan in place in the event of an emergency. This plan should encompass four main elements:

## **Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit**

Fresh water, food, and clean air are most important when assembling an emergency supply kit. You will need a gallon of water per person per day. For food, you should include canned and dried food that is easy to store and prepare. To ensure clean air, the kit should contain something for each person to cover their mouth and nose. You can purchase filter masks that fit snugly on the face at hardware stores, but this “something” can be as basic as three layers of a cotton t-shirt, handkerchief, or towel.

Other items to include in your emergency supply kit include: warm clothes for colder weather; a sleeping bag for each person; a flashlight; a battery-powered radio; extra batteries; a first-aid kit; toilet articles; duct tape; heavyweight garbage bags; and other special items needed by you or your family members.

## **Make a Family Communication Plan**


County residents should also plan how they will contact family members who are not together in the event of an emergency. For instance, all family members could call or e-mail the same person. The Department of Homeland Security suggests designating someone out-of-town, because local lines may be tied up during an emergency.

Review what your family will do should certain situations arise. For instance, when you cannot leave your location, you should employ a process known as “shelter-in-place,” wherein you choose to remain in an interior room with as few windows and doors as possible and seal off any avenues where air may enter your location. You should also create a plan for leaving your home, and should select several destinations in several different directions so that you have options should an emergency arise. Make sure you bring your emergency supply kit if you need to change locations.

## **Be Informed**

Remember that natural and man-made emergencies differ from terrorist threats. You can go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to learn about potential terrorist threats.

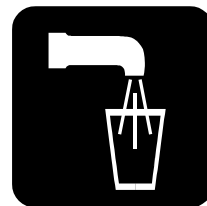
## **Remain Calm**

While it will be difficult to remain calm during an emergency, if you have followed steps to ensure emergency preparedness, you will, at least, be ready in the event of an emergency. 

*The information for this article was provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Additional information can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).*



# Emergency



## IMPORTANT PHONE NOS.

Animal Services	(240) 773 – 5925
Abandoned Cars	(301) 840 – 2454
Air Pollution Incidents	(240) 777 – 7770
Building Permits	(240) 777 – 6370
Building Code Inspections	(240) 777 – 6210
Consumer Affairs	(240) 777 – 3636
County Information	(240) 777 – 1000
Electrical Licenses & Permits	(240) 777 – 6240
Environmental Protection	(240) 777 – 7770
Fire-Code Violations	(240) 777 – 2457
Housing & Code Enforcement	(240) 777 – 3785
Illegal Dumping	(240) 777 – 7770/DUMP
Untagged Cars	(240) 777 – 3785
Noise Control	(240) 777 – 7770
Recycling/Leaf Collection	(240) 777 – 6410
Snow Removal & Pot Holes	(240) 777 – ROAD
Solid Waste	(240) 777 – 6410
Street Lights	(240) 777 – 2190
Use & Occupancy Permits	(240) 777 – 6210
Vendor Information	(240) 777 – 6240
Water Pollution Incidents	(240) 777 – 7770
Weed Control	(240) 777 – 3785
Zoning Information	(240) 777 – 6240
Zoning Complaints	(240) 777 – 6259

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To be placed on our mailing list or to submit questions or comments, please contact us at the above address or [mcgatty@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:mcgatty@montgomerycountymd.gov). Please include your name, address, and telephone number or e-mail address. *Code Words* is published quarterly.

## Managing Stormwater Runoff

**Walter Wilson**

*Associate County Attorney*

From as far back as the early 1980s, the County has had laws in place intended to minimize the most serious environmental problems associated with stormwater runoff. The term “stormwater” refers, primarily, to water that originates during precipitation events, such as rainfall and snowmelt. Stormwater that is not absorbed into the ground due to the imperviousness of improvements on previously undeveloped land becomes surface runoff that eventually ends up in surface waterways—lakes, rivers, streams—carrying with it any contaminants picked up along the way. The result is, not only pollution of surface waters, but accelerated stream channel erosion and increased flood damage as well. Thus, as the pace of development in the County has increased over the past decade and new State and Federal water quality mandates have begun to take effect, the need to control this runoff has gradually taken on a greater sense of urgency.

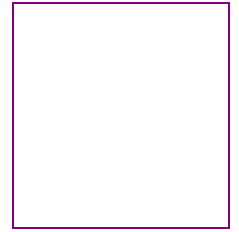
Stormwater management facilities are the conventional means by which pollutants that would otherwise be washed unabated into bodies of water like the Potomac River or the Chesapeake Bay during precipitation events are arrested. These stormwater management facilities, of which there are more than 3,000 in Montgomery County alone, consist of wet ponds, dry ponds, sand filters, infiltration trenches, oil grit separators, and underground storage structures. The type of facility that is appropriate varies with the type of development. However, Chapter 19 of the County Code now mandates that any person receiving either a building permit or a sediment control permit provide for on-site stormwater management, unless the Director of Permitting Services waives that requirement.

Chapter 19 also specifies what the maintenance responsibilities are for any owner of property that contains a stormwater facility. Those responsibilities fall into two categories of maintenance: structural and non-structural. Structural maintenance involves most of the corrective and preventive measures taken to avert structural failure or otherwise ensure that the facility remains in proper working condition to serve its intended

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

#### *Stormwater*

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purpose. Most other activities aimed at addressing conditions that could have a less immediate effect on the proper functioning of the facility—landscaping, solid waste removal, lawn mowing—are considered non-structural maintenance.

Historically, all stormwater facility maintenance has been the responsibility of its owner. In 2001, however, the County amended Chapter 19 to authorize the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to implement and administer a program under which the County would take responsibility for the structural maintenance of privately-owned stormwater management facilities that primarily serve residential properties. The principal beneficiaries of that change in the law have been community associations that are eligible to transfer the structural maintenance responsibilities for their common area stormwater facilities to the County. However, it is

important to note that, even after that transfer has been completed, the property owner remains responsible for non-structural maintenance which, aside from landscaping and trash removal, might also require the property owner to abate any other condition on the property that DEP reasonably finds may adversely affect the facility's proper functioning.

More information about the County's stormwater facility maintenance program is available online at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov>. Click on the link for Departments, then Environmental Protection, and then scroll down to the link for Stormwater Facility Maintenance Program. Information can also be obtained by calling DEP directly at 240-777-7700. 